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Flax, which at the beginning of the season, was sold at a very low rate, has experienced a considerable rise; and as large orders are now filling up for the English and Scotch markets, it is probable the prices will keep up, and the farmer find himself so amply compensated for the labour and expense of cultivation, as to induce him to increase his exertions in the production of this necessary material in our staple manufacture.

As last summer was extremely favourable for the ripening and saving of seed; it is to be hoped the growers of flax were generally so wise as to avail themselves of it, and not trust to a supply from foreign countries, which at all times is precarious, and may, if depended on, again involve us in difficulties similar to those we experienced two years ago.

#### COMMERCIAL REPORT.

To complete the crisis of commercial distress, with British manufactures burned on the continent, and the declaration of war on the part of Sweden, (so that both sides of the Sound are in possession of hostile powers, to the exclusion of all trade with the Baltic, unless the small part once amicly connived at by the continental powers, in the shape of exports from them) we have now the probability of a contest with the United States of North America. The French Emperor having revoked his Berlin and Milan decrees, and our government still retaining, or evading to relinquish their orders in council, that source of so much calamity already to these countries, the president of the United States has declared their ports open to the vessels of France, and that they will be shut against ours on the second of February next, by the operation of their non-intercourse act, if the British orders are not rescinded before that date. In the mean time, some American vessels entering into French ports, have been seized by British cruisers, and await the decisions of our Admiralty courts. America at length appears decidedly to have made a stand, and it now rests with our government to choose between the repeal of their decrees, or open hostility with America. The determination of this important question may in a considerable degree hinge on the change of administration, expected to result from the regency. The time is so limited, that any decision can now scarcely reach America, previously to the term fixed for the termination of amicable intercourse. If the trade with America should be permanently interrupted, we may then be considered nearly to have reached the climax of commercial distress. We have the consolation to hope that all the flaxseed will have been shipped from America previous to the operation of the non-intercourse act.

We are enabled to state from good private authority, that on a conference with the Marquis Wellesley, he informed some American merchants who waited on him, that the intentions of ministers would shortly be made known to the chairman of the American chamber. It is thought that the orders in council would be rescinded, and a *vigorous real blockade* carried into effect *against certain of the French ports*, and this measure, it is conceived, would do away the *constructive blockades*, and satisfy the Americans, who very justly object to the fiction of a nominal blockade, while the ports are unattended by a blockading force.

A letter from London gives the state of things in a few words. "The linen trade is uncommonly dull; indeed business of all kinds is quite as bad: the country begins to feel the effects of the *wise* measures of our rulers." On this feeling spreading, and the difficulties of the times pressing on individuals, must our hopes of amendment be built, if by such pressure a general sentiment in favour of peace is excited. While the war lasts, we can only look for a continuance and aggravation of distress, affecting our trade and manufactures. The pressure may occasionally be felt more heavily in one branch than another, but the restoration of peace can alone remove the load.

The distresses of the times affecting Britain at least in an equal proportion as Ireland, prove the fallacy of the argument, that our calamities arise from the union. We must look to the war for a common cause. Two hundred and seventy three

bankruptcies, in Britain, besides stoppages and compositions almost innumerable during last month, loudly proclaim the fact.

During this month, some alarm was occasioned by a temporary suspicion of the stability of the bank in Dublin, commonly called Beresford's bank, from the name of the first partner under the old firm. The other partners, Ball, Plunket and Doyne, after removing Beresford from their connexion, succeeded in convincing the public of their stability. While paper, unbottomed on payments in specie, at the option of the holder, continues to be the basis of our circulating medium, such shocks may be frequently expected.

Large exportations of wheat from Limerick, have been sent out to feed the army in Portugal, and also the non-military population now crammed together in Lisbon, while a great share of the provisions of that country was destroyed, to prevent them falling into the hands of the French. War is not only frequently attended by famine in those countries, more immediately the seat of its ravages, but also is productive of scarcity and high prices in situations remote from the actual scene. It was expected that in consequence of these exportations, wheat and flour would have risen with us, but they still continue to decline; the abundance of last harvest being so great, as to resist any tendency to advance, notwithstanding this unexpected drain.

Exchange on London rose about the beginning of the month, as high as  $9\frac{1}{4}$  per cent. It shortly dropped to  $8\frac{1}{2}$ , and has since fluctuated from  $8\frac{1}{2}$  to 9 per cent. Discount on bills on Dublin, at 61 days sight, continues at 1 per cent, and the discount on bank notes is about 2 per cent.

## NATURALIST'S REPORT.

*From November 20, till December 20.*

Along the woods, along the Moorish fens,  
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;  
And up the loose disjointed cliffs,  
And fractured mountain wild, the brawling brook  
And cave, pensive, send a hollow moan,  
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.

THOMPSON.

In our northern climate, at this season of inactivity among most of the vegetable productions of nature, there is little to draw our attention abroad, the cold, wet, and stormy weather, which has prevailed, since the beginning of November, in addition to the Autumnal plants mentioned in the last report, seems to have shed its unfriendly influence over even the last class of vegetables, and prevented the appearance of the Fungi, or Mushrooms, those forerunners of putrefaction and winter, whose strange variety of form and colours would make them desirable plants in every curious garden, could they be regularly cultivated: but hitherto only one species has engaged attention, although several other kinds merit equally the gardiner's skill to offer them as another article in the catalogue of modern luxuries.

Mention is made in some of the periodical productions of the British press, that great numbers of those birds called Crosbills (*Loxia curvirostra*) have been observed this season in England. In particular situations where Larch trees abound, they have been long since seen in Ireland; Rutty, is however, the first Irish author who mentions them as natives; they have been seen at Tullamore park, near Birr, county Offaly, from about the time the Larch trees began to bear seed plentifully; this summer they have appeared at several other places, but not in such plenty that they could be reckoned mischievous, as is mentioned in the English publications.—The curious structure of the bill of this bird must excite the admiration of even the most incurious, and prove a fine subject for those philosophers who pursue the doctrine of final causes.

The Fieldfares which arrived October 31, appear to have passed on to the southward, as few are now to be seen.